Remembering Jane Benedict — page 4

Housing for people, not profit

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ON HOUSING
Housing for People Not Profit

Tenant Inquilino

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339 Lafayette St.
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PERIODICAL

RGB Votes 5.5% Increase

By Steven Wishnia

Tenants' activism over the last year—more than 250 showed up at the June 20 Rent Guidelines Board (RGB) final vote, chanting "Roll back the rents!" and "Rent freeze now"—has accomplished at least one thing: It's made the RGB pay lip service to the problems caused by the city's skyrocketing rents. Before the board voted to set next year's guidelines for increases on rent-stabilized apartments, virtually every member spoke of the city's "affordable-housing crisis." Even landlord representative Steven Schleider said the city needed to create affordable housing to replace rent-stabilized units lost to deregulation.

The board then voted to increase the price of affordable housing. By a 6-3 margin, it approved letting landlords raise rents by 2.75 percent for a one-year lease renewal and 5.5 percent for two years. Rent-stabilized tenants who pay for their own heat will get slightly smaller increases, 2.25 percent and 4.5 percent.

The RGB rejected a two-year rent freeze on apartments by 6-3. Martin Zelnik, the only one of the five public members to vote for the freeze, said that while the board considers the effects of rising fuel costs on landlords' incomes—a big issue this year—it does not take into account the effects of rising rents, subway fares, and college tuition on tenants' quality of life. He "reluctantly" voted for the final increase.

The board also voted 6-2 with one abstention to freeze rents on residential hotels and rooming houses, but rejected Zelnik's proposal to lower rents in such buildings if the landlord has been caught illegally converting rooms to transient use.

RGB tenant representative Adriene Holder said she was "very disappointed" by the results. "You've got all these people on the board saying that there's an affordable-housing crisis, and then they say, 'that's why we're voting for this increase.'" As the RGB traditionally sets smaller rent increases in election years, she added, "I think the next two years are going to be really bad for tenants."

BENNETT BAUMER

50 PERCENT IS TOO MUCH: But the RGB didn't listen to the message.

"I don't know what I'm going to do," said Cathy, a 61-year-old widow from the Bronx who is trying to get on disability because she has torn ligaments in her knees. "The money doesn't come in like that."

The tenants who turned out at Cooper Union's Great Hall to protest—including several dozen Lower East Side residents with pink "Rent Freeze Now" stickers and city workers in green "Everyday Heroes" T-shirts from District Council 37—heavily outnumbered the about 40 landlords holding "Help Small Owners" and "Higher Costs—Higher Rents" signs. "We're not gonna make it easy," a young woman called out as a group of tenants surged into the aisles. "Let 'em know how you feel," an old man called back. The crowd of tenants edged over to the landlord side of the hall, chanting, "Open your books, you dirty crooks," while a blonde landlord shrieked back, "No free lunch! No free lunch!"

In proposing the rent freeze, tenant representative David Pagan noted that "very few apartments are affordable" for tenants making less than 80 per-

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Appeals Court Protects Some Mitchell-Lama Tenants

By Sue Susman

On June 14, the state Court of Appeals issued its decision in the Westgate case, *KSLM-Columbus Apartments v. New York State Division of Housing & Community Renewal*. A few tenants can now breathe a sigh of relief, but all of us better breathe deeply to focus our energy for an ongoing battle.

The decision, based on an apparently novel application of the 1971 vacancy-decontrol law, seems to protect about a quarter of the city's 20,000 Mitchell-Lama apartments, but leaves the rest vulnerable to massive rent increases if their landlords buy the buildings out and then claim "unique and peculiar circumstances."

"We think that our position is better than before," says Jean Dorsey, president of the Westgate Tenants Association, "and certainly are thrilled to bring some closure for those in occupancy prior to July 1971."

The case initially concerned which law would apply to the tenants at Westgate, a building removed from Mitchell-Lama in 1997: the Rent Stabilization Law (RSL) of 1969, or the Emergency Tenant Protection Act (ETPA) of 1974. The building is covered by rent stabilization, but under the RSL, increases to the old Mitchell-Lama rent are limited to whatever the Rent Guidelines Board allows each year, with extra charges permitted for major capital improvements and in cases of hardship to the landlord. The ETPA, however, provides a fourth basis for increasing the rents: "unique and peculiar circumstances resulting in the rents being substantially different from those prevailing in the area." In that case, the state's Division of Housing and Community Renewal, which administers rent stabilization, "may adjust" the rents.

Westgate's landlord filed a "unique and peculiar circumstances" application, seeking rents up to seven times what tenants were paying under Mitchell-Lama. DHCR denied the application, noting that Westgate was constructed before March 10, 1969, the end-date for inclusion under the RSL. The landlord appealed, losing three times, until the Appellate Division ruled that the ETPA applied to pre-1969 buildings—and noted, even though no one had raised or even argued the

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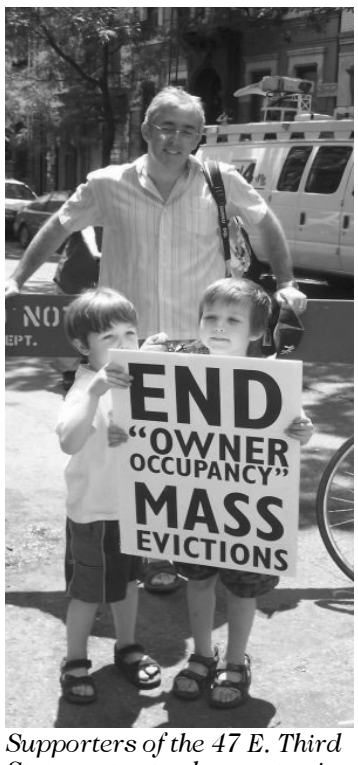
Third Street Tenants Win Round

Embattled tenants at 47 East Third St. won a victory June 24, when State Supreme Court Justice Paul Feinman issued a preliminary injunction barring their landlord from evicting them until their case is settled. The building's owners, Alistair and Catherine Economakis, have been trying to oust all the tenants, claiming that they need all 15 apartments to make a home for themselves and their child. Justice Feinman noted that the law allowing landlords to move into rent-stabilized apartments has generally applied to one unit at a time, not to whole buildings; that the tenants would face severe hardship if evicted; and that there is no effective penalty for fraudulent "personal occupancy" claims.



COURTESY OF 47 E. 3RD ST. TENANTS ASSOC.

Supporters of the 47 E. Third St. tenants at a demonstration June 25.

"It really is a good outcome and we are happy about it," says tenant Ursula Kinzel—but the building's residents will still have to go through several years of litigation to keep their homes.

Pro-Tenant Bills Pass in Council, Legislature

By Bennett Baumer

Tenant groups won the passage of two bills, one in the City Council and one in the state legislature, that will help people in government-subsidized housing and disabled New Yorkers.

On June 23, the City Council passed the Tenant Empowerment Act (Intro 186), which will give tenants in over 108,000 government-subsidized affordable apartments the ability to purchase the buildings should the landlord opt out of the subsidy program. A large coalition of tenant groups, including Met Council, pushed for the bill, and the Council passed it by a vote of 47 to 3.

The bill specifically gives tenants in Mitchell-Lama and Section 8 the right of "first refusal" to purchase their buildings if the landlord decides to leave the program. If the tenants can match the free-market bid offered by an outside party, the landlord will be required to sell them the building.

"There's a lot to be done to make this bill solid," said Andrea Foley-Murphy of Tenants and Neighbors. "[Intro 186] gives tenants a seat at the table."

Mayor Michael Bloomberg may veto the bill, but the Council could override him. Bloomberg wants to pass legislation that would use a different method to prevent Mitchell-Lama landlords from decontrolling apartments, by helping them refinance debt and make repairs.

A day after Intro 186 passed, tenants and disabled advocates scored another victory in Albany, winning rent freezes for up to 20,000 households headed by disabled people. Households in New York State that receive SSI, SSDI, or veterans' pensions, along with those enrolled in the Medicaid Buy-In program, will be exempted from rent increases when their rents rise above 30 percent of their income.

Nonetheless, advocates wanted the state legislature to set a higher income limit for the exemption. Senior citizens participating in the SCRIE program qualify for rent exemptions if their household income is below $24,000. A single disabled person must have an income below $17,000 to qualify.

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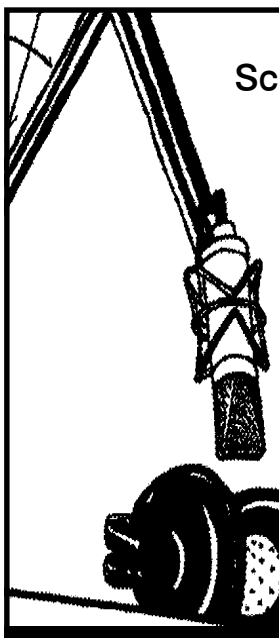

Scott Sommer hosts Met Council's

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EL INQUILINO HISPANO

RGB aprueba aumento de un 5.5%

Por Steven Wishnia
Traducido por Lightning Translations

El activismo de los inquilinos durante el año pasado (más de 250 de ellos acudieron a la votación final de la Junta de Regulación de Renta, coreando "Disminuyan las rentas" y "Congelación de rentas ahora") logró cuando menos una cosa: hizo a la RGB reconocer los problemas causados por las rentas estratosféricas, aunque sea con puro jarabe de pico. Antes de que la junta votara para fijar las pautas de los incrementos del próximo año en los apartamentos de renta estabilizada, casi todos los miembros hablaron de la "crisis de vivienda asequible." Hasta el representante de los caseros Steven Schleider dijo que la ciudad necesitaba crear vivienda asequible para reemplazar las unidades de renta estabilizada perdidas por la desregulación.

La junta luego votó para aumentar el precio de las viviendas asequibles. Por un margen de 6 a 3, decidió permitir a los caseros aumentar las rentas un 2.75 por ciento por una renovación de contrato de un año y 5.5 por ciento por dos años. Los inquilinos de renta estabilizada que pagan su propia calefacción recibirán aumentos un poco más pequeños, un 2.25 por ciento y un 4.5 por ciento.

La RGB rechazó una congelación de renta de apartamentos por dos años, con una votación de 6 a 3. Martin Zelnik, el único miembro público que votó por la congelación, dijo que mientras la junta toma en consideración los efectos del costo en el alza de combustible en los ingresos de los caseros (una cuestión importante este año), no toma en cuenta el efecto en la calidad de vida de los inquilinos causado por el alza en rentas, tarifas del metro y el costo de la enseñanza. Él votó "a regañadientes" por el aumento final.

La junta también votó 6 a 2 con una abstención para congelar las rentas en los hoteles residenciales y pensiones, pero rechazó la propuesta de Zelnik para disminuir las rentas en tales edificios si se ha pillado al casero en el acto ilegal de convertir habitaciones para uso transitorio.

La representante de los inquilinos en la RGB Adriene Holder dijo que estuvo "muy decepcionada" por los resultados. "Hay tanta gente en la junta diciendo que existe una crisis de vivienda asequible y luego dice, 'Por eso votamos por este aumento.'" Como la RGB tradicionalmente fija aumentos de renta más pequeños en años de elecciones municipales, añadió, "creo que los dos próximos años van a ser realmente malos para los inquilinos."

"No sé que voy a hacer," dijo

pasa a la página 6

Los Ajustes de la "Junta de Regulación de Renta" de la Ciudad de Nueva York (Orden No. 36)

Para los contratos de apartamentos de Renta Estabilizada que comienzan el 1ro. de octubre de 2004 hasta el 30 de septiembre de 2005.

Los topes de renta que aparecen en el cuadro son los incrementos máximos que los dueños de edificios pueden cobrar legalmente por los apartamentos de renta estabilizada en la ciudad de Nueva York. Son válidos para todos los contratos que comienzan dentro del período de doce meses a partir del 1ro. de octubre de 2004. Los incrementos de alquiler basados en las pautas para la renovación del contrato de 1 o 2 años pueden cobrarse solamente una vez durante el período cubierto por dichas pautas, y deben ser aplicados a la renta legal estabilizada para el 30 de septiembre de 2004. Las cantidades que aparecen en el cuadro y los incrementos para los apartamentos vacíos no se aplican a los apartamentos que estaban sujetos a renta controlada en aquella fecha. No se permite el recargo también conocido como el «impuesto de pobres.»

Los Contratos para Apartamentos Vacíos o Nuevos En junio de 1997, el gobernador George Pataki, al intentar destruir la regulación de rentas, forzó cambios que les dieron a los caseros un recargo muy grande por los apartamentos vacíos. Una cláusula de la "Reforma al Acta de Regulación de Renta" de 1997 permite que los nuevos alquileres sean incrementados en un porcentaje obligatorio: 20% para un contrato de dos años, y por un contrato de 1 año, 20% de incremento menos la diferencia en el tope de renovación para los contratos de 1 y 2 años. La ley permite también incrementos adicionales para los apartamentos vacíos donde no se habían cobrado incrementos por desocupación por ocho años o más.

Exceso de Cobro Los inquilinos deben estar al tanto de que muchos caseros van a aprovecharse de la complejidad de estas regulaciones y subvenciones, así como del poco conocimiento de los inquilinos del historial de renta de sus apartamentos, para cobrar un alquiler ilegal. Una vez que el inquilino haya tomado posesión del apartamento, puede escoger entre llenar un formulario de queja de exceso de cobro de renta con la oficina de la División de Vivienda y Renovación Comunal (DHCR), o disputar la cantidad de la renta en la corte de vivienda de la ciudad para que se determine cuál es el alquiler legal.

Si un posible inquilino da muestras de conocer sus derechos, lo más probable es que el casero no firmará ningún contrato con tal inquilino. Los caseros evitan contratar con inquilinos que les pueden dar problemas. El exceso de cobro de alquiler es muy común. Todos los inquilinos deben luchar contra posibles excesos de cobro. Obtenga y llene un formulario *Form RA-89* con la oficina de DHCR para determinar el alquiler correcto en los archivos oficiales. Llame a la DHCR a (718) 739-6400 para obtener un formulario, o búsquelo en el sitio www.dhcr.state.ny.us.

La Apelación de la Renta de Mercado Justa Otro tipo de exceso de cobro sucede frecuentemente cuando se vacía un apartamento que previamente estaba sujeto a renta controlada y se alquila con renta estabilizada. La Junta de Regulación de Renta (RGB) establece anualmente lo que ellos llaman el "Tope Especial de la Renta de Mercado Justa," el cual es empleado por la DHCR para bajar las rentas de mercado injustas de los inquilinos que llenan el formulario llamado "Apelación a la Renta Justa de Mercado" (FMRA). Según la Orden 36, es la Renta de Mercado Justa de HUD o un 50% sobre la renta base máxima. Ningún inquilino de un apartamento de renta estabilizada que fue descontrolado el 1ro de abril de 1984 o después debe dejar de poner a prueba la llamada "Renta Legal Inicial Regulada" (renta de mercado) que los caseros cobran cuando hay descontrol del apartamento. Use el formulario de DHCR *Form RA-89*. Indique claramente que su queja es tanto una queja de "Apelación a la Renta Justa de Mercado" como de "exceso de cobro." La corte de vivienda no puede tomar decisión sobre una Apelación de Renta de Mercado. Apartamentos vacíos que antes estaban controlados en edificios que se han convertido en cooperativas o condominios no se vuelven estabilizados y no satisfacen los requisitos para la Apelación de la Renta Justa de Mercado.

Exención de Incrementos para las Personas de Mayor Edad: Las personas de 62 años o más que viven en apartamentos estabilizados y cuyos ingresos familiares anuales son de $24,000 o menos, y que pagan (o enfrentan un incremento de alquiler que los forzaría a pagar) una renta de un tercio o más de sus ingresos, pueden tener derecho al programa de Exención de Incrementos para las Personas de Mayor Edad (SCRIE, por sus siglas en inglés), si aplican al Departamento de la Ciudad de Nueva York Sobre las Personas de Mayor Edad, cuya dirección es: SCRIE Unit, 2 Lafayette Street, NY, NY 10007. Si el alquiler actual de un inquilino que tiene derecho a este programa sobrepasa un tercio del ingreso, no se lo puede reducir, pero es posible evitar incrementos de alquiler en el futuro. Obtenga el formulario de SCRIE por llamar al (212) 442-1000.

Unidades de Desván (Lofts) Los incrementos legales sobre la renta base para las unidades de desván son de un 2.5 por ciento por un contrato de un año y un 5.5 por ciento por un contrato de dos años. No se permiten incrementos para las unidades de desván vacías.

Hoteles y Apartamentos de una Sola Habitación

No habrá ningún aumento de la renta este año para los apartamentos de hotel de Clase A, casas de habitaciones, hoteles de clase B (de 30 habitaciones o más), hoteles de una sola habitación, y las casas de habitaciones (Clase B, 6-29 cuartos). No se permiten incrementos para apartamentos vacíos.

La Desregulación de Rentas Altas y Altos Ingresos (1) Los apartamentos que legalmente se alquilan por $2,000 o más por mes y que se desocuparon entre el 7 de julio de 1993 y el 1ro. de octubre de 1993, o en o desde del 1ro de abril de 1994 son sujetos a la desregulación. (2) La misma desregulación se les aplica, para el mismo período establecido en (1), a los apartamentos que legalmente pagan $2,000 o más mensualmente aunque no se desocupen, si el ingreso total de la familia es más de $175,000 en los dos años consecutivos previos. Para cumplir los requisitos de esta segunda forma de desregulación, el casero tiene que enviarle un formulario de certificación de ingreso al inquilino entre el 1ro de enero y el 1ro de mayo, así como someter dicho formulario al DHCR y conseguir su aprobación.

Para pautas previas, llame a la RGB al 212-385-2934 o busque el sitio www.housingnyc.com.

Tipo de Contrato	Renta Legal Actual		Contrato de 1 Año	Contrato de 2 Años
Renovación del Contrato	Si el dueño paga la calefacción		3.5%	6.5%
	Si el inquilino paga la calefacción		3%	6%
Contratos para Apartamentos Vacíos	Más de $500	Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años	17%	20%
		Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, más el 17%	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, más el 20%
	Menos de $300	Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años	17% + $100	20% + $100
		Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, + 17% + $100	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, + 20% + $100
	Renta de $300 a $500	Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años	17% o $100, lo que sea mayor	20% o $100, lo que sea mayor
		Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, mas 17%, o $100, lo que sea mayor	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, mas 20%, o $100, lo que sea mayor

Remembering Jane Benedict

By Jenny Laurie

Jane Benedict, principal founder and longtime chair of Met Council, died on June 19th at the age of 93 in Oakland, California, where she had been living since 1999.

For those of us who knew Jane, her death was the loss of a unique and remarkable person. Jane was a friend and inspiration to many of us, and her company was a delight. For tenants in New York City, her death marks the loss of a leader who worked for 50 years to win decent, affordable, and integrated housing for all of the city's residents.

Jane's stellar quality for those of us who learned from her at Met Council was that she was incredibly brave. She could speak directly to a threatening landlord twice her size at a curbside picket, or to a panel of senators at a government hearing. Because she was not didactic or preachy, but personal and down to earth, Jane's bravery inspired us all to continue fighting, even when the situation seemed hopeless. Her example allowed us to refuse to accept things the way they are and made us all fight, in whatever ways we could devise, against landlords, government agencies, and the system.

While anyone who knew her for even a short time could sense that she had a bone-deep commitment to fairness, equality and economic justice, she would talk as easily about simple family logistics as about how to organize a militant demonstration.

"She is quite captivating and can hold a group's attention without resorting to shouting, raising her voice, or histrionics," current Met Council board chair Scott M. Sommer wrote in tribute to Jane in 1999, when she moved to Oakland to live near her son. "Jane is clearly blessed with the ability and gift of being able to talk to people of all different backgrounds, political beliefs, educational levels, and cultures without being condescending, patronizing, or nasty."

Jane's life as a tenant activist began when she and her husband, Peter Hawley, moved to Yorkville in the 1940s to raise their two children. Jane volunteered in the office of the local chapter of the American Labor Party. The ALP, then led by the immensely popular Rep. Vito Marcantonio, helped tenants throughout the city, in the classic New York political clubhouse fashion, by helping them file forms with agencies or write letters to their landlords. Jane once described the neighborhood as a small United Nations, with residents from Germany, Ireland, and eastern and southern Europe.

After World War II, Yorkville, with its old tenement housing and elderly, working-class, and poor residents, was ripe for the new tide of development taking over the city. Spurred by the postwar building boom and the removal of the Third Avenue El, developers were besieging the neighborhood, tearing down the old rent-controlled tenements and constructing new luxury buildings. Desperate neighbors sought Jane out for advice about how to avoid eviction when the landlord planned to demolish their building. At that time, despite the postwar rent-control laws, landlords had unlimited rights to evict tenants when they planned to demolish a building.

From Vietnam to Iraq, the issue remains the same.

"We would do everything we could think of to try and put off the day of doom when they would have to get out. We would have demonstrations, we'd get free legal help if we could," Jane said of the often fruitless attempts to stop the evictions. "We tried to get the law amended. We battered away and we did make some headway. But there was no stopping the avalanche." To fight this displacement, Jane, along with the late Met Council activist Irene Kohn and other veteran ALP members, established the Yorkville Save Our Homes Committee.

Jane in the '90s.

Save Our Homes Committees and other neighborhood groups were organizing around the city to fight the massive redevelopment plans of Robert Moses. Moses, the metropolitan area's development czar from the 1930s through the 1960s, planned to use Title I of the National Housing Act to tear down much of Corlears Hook, Harlem, Washington Square, Williamsburg, the Lower East Side, Lincoln Square, Manhattanville, the Upper West Side, Downtown Brooklyn, and many other neighborhoods. These plans, which led to the eviction of, by some estimates, over 100,000 tenants, spurred the groups to join forces.

In 1958, numerous neighborhood activists, including Mamie Jackson of the Bronx and Esther Rand, Staughton Lynd, and Frances Goldin from the Lower East Side, came together to form the Metropolitan Council on Housing. Their goals were to fight against efforts by landlords to win the repeal of rent control and against Moses' bulldozing neighborhoods in the name of urban renewal.

While working with the new coalition, Jane continued to lead the Yorkville group, where she agitated for the development of affordable housing on empty sites. That resulted in the first integrated meetings and committees in Yorkville (which was, in her words, "lily-white" in those days). The effort resulted in the building of the Stanley Isaacs Houses and the Holmes Towers, and helped propel the development of the Mitchell-Lama program.

In the beginning, Met Council focused on the big housing and social issues. "We always fought against racism," Jane said. "The thing that really brought Met Council forward was taking positions on issues, testifying on them, demonstrating on them, and issuing literature on them." The late Met Council activist Franz Lehman remembered meeting Jane during the fight against Stuyvesant Town's whites-only policy, which led to the 1951 city law banning segregation in developments receiving public subsidies.

Later, the organization developed a way of helping individual tenants with their housing problems, modeled on methods used by the unions, the political clubs, and the neighborhood groups that had joined forces to form Met Council. Jane always credited Esther Rand, who ran the East Side Tenants' Council, as the model in getting relief for individual tenants. Jane was also inspired by the Cooper Square Committee, which issued its own plans for redevelopment that included affordable housing (drawn primarily by Walter Thabit, who died earlier this year). "These were neighborhoods where Moses, who was a very powerful man, was actually beaten back by very grass-roots groups," she said.

Jane led Met Council through the 1960s and 1970s, organizing tenant associations to win better services and repairs, and developing the rent strike—which the

Jane's ability to analyze an issue concisely and effectively and move people to action was in a league of its own. She was unmatched at cultivating organizational discipline and commitment—clearly a reason why Met Council has survived for almost 50 years.

Luckily, those of us who got to work closely with her got to know not only the incredible depth of Jane's and her husband, Peter Hawley's, dedication to social justice and activism. We also benefited from a glimpse at a wonderful marriage, grounded not only in love, but in immense respect for each other. They selflessly showered that love and respect upon many of us at Met Council, and it no doubt affected and improved all of us who experienced it in countless ways.

—Scott M. Sommer

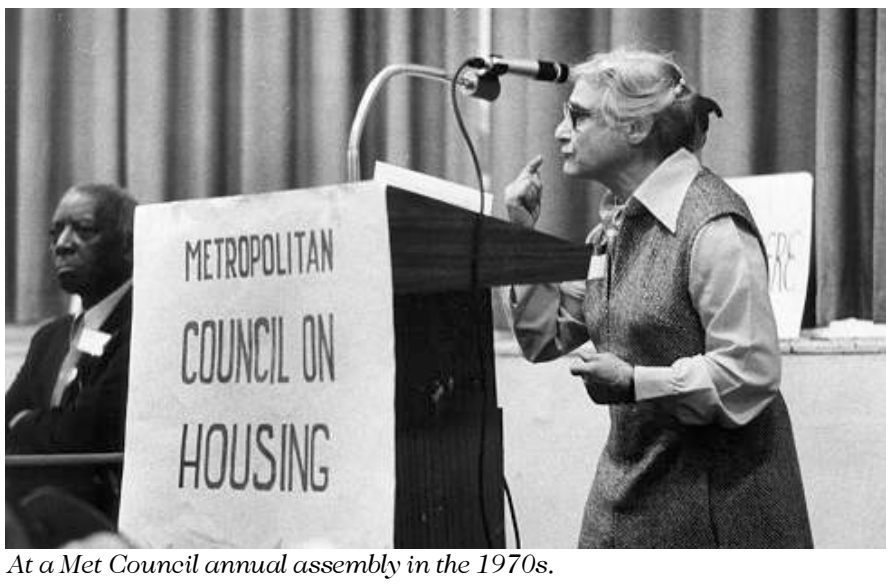
The death of Jane Benedict also marks the end of an era of social consciousness and a sense of social justice.

I recall the first time I met Jane at some event at the old 23rd Street McBurney YMCA (now a "luxury" condo) when I was struck by her interest in developing and nurturing others who showed an interest in New York City's everlasting affordable-housing problems.

Probably many remember Jane's debate with Governor Mario Cuomo in a conference room in the state capitol in Albany. The debate began after Jane (who may have been, on a good day, four feet, 10 inches tall) was lifted up to a tabletop. She let the governor know in no uncertain terms what she thought should be done!

Her commitment, determination and activism will long be remembered by all those who were lucky enough to know her.

—Gloria Sukenick



At a Met Council annual assembly in the 1970s.

courts did not then recognize as a legal way for tenants to demand repairs—as a widely used technique for getting the heat back on. The organization agitated for better code enforcement and a warranty-of-habitability law, for the building of integrated, affordable housing, and to preserve and expand the rent-control laws. Jane was a magnet for new volunteers; even in her eighties, she was attracting people in their twenties to the work.

"I came to Met Council to complain about my landlord, met Jane, and left with a worldview," Tito Delgado, a Met Council organizer in the 1970s, said on a recent radio tribute to her. Dave Powell, an organizer who started in the mid-'90s, remembers calling around to get help organizing a picket against Rudy Giuliani at a town meeting in his Bay Ridge neighborhood: "I called every activist group I knew. When I called [Met Council], Jane Benedict picked up the phone. We talked for about half an hour. I hope nobody forgets that Jane ran on a healthy mixture of compassion and anger. That's one of the reasons I love her. She called it as she saw it. She knew that rage is a natural response to injustice and she didn't suppress those feelings. At the same time, she knew how to focus that rage in a very effective way—she used it to build. She understood that the best way to stick it to those bastards—and to survive—is to organize."

Jane began to step back from her intense work with Met Council in the mid-1980s, encouraging others to take the reins of the organization. She continued to join delegations to Albany, counsel tenants and tenant associations in the office and in the branches, and serve on the board of directors (for many years as honorary chair, since the other board members would not accept her repeatedly offered resignation). In the 1980s, Jane was particularly struck by the emerging scourge of homelessness, and was active in the campaign against "warehousing" apartments and the push to get the city to rehab abandoned buildings to house low-income tenants. Although the venues changed through the decades, she was always in the fight against racism and economic injustice.

Jane did all this work while raising a family, showing us a model of a caring and loving wife, mother and grandmother. As her son, Jim Hawley, put it recently, "With Mom, there was no sense of having to balance [work and family]; she just lived her life and raised us as a part of that life." She loved a vodka martini, dining out in restaurants with friends, and being the warm, inviting person who was such a model for young people at Met Council.

Jane is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Jim Hawley and Diane Ehrensaft; her daughter, Ellen Hawley, and her daughter's partner, Ida Swearingen; her grandchildren, Rebecca Hawley and Jesse Ehrensaft-Hawley; and her great-granddaughter, Satya Hawley.

Jenny Laurie is executive director of Met Council.

A public memorial for Jane Benedict is planned for October in New York. For those who wish to send cards, Met Council will forward them to the family. Met Council and the family will be establishing an award to honor Jane's memory. If you wish to make a donation, please send it to: Jane Benedict Memorial, c/o Met Council on Housing, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012

I met Jane in 1974, when I was a 19-year-old college student assigned to intern at Met Council. I had never met a community organizer before, and the example set by both Jane Benedict and Esther Rand literally changed my life.

Finally, I saw women I wanted to emulate—strong, passionate, outspoken, and sassy. I have never forgotten them and credit them with teaching me that politics matters and requires our constant attention.

—Eleanor Bader

An all-night vigil protesting the Maximum Base Rent law in 1973.

Jane Benedict was the most militant tenant leader I can remember in the city of New York. In 1988, a group of tenants from 521-523 West 156th St. was organized by the Riverside Edgecombe Neighborhood Association to protest at the Department of Housing Preservation and Development headquarters at 100 Gold Street. The tenants, almost all low-income women with small children, had no electricity, so they had to drape wiring from room to room to plug in their appliances. They had no gas, so they had to cook on electric stoves, and they organized themselves to cook cooperatively. The buildings had been without heat or hot water for two years.

I invited Jane, as the chairwoman of Met Council, to join us in the demonstration. When we arrived, the doors leading to the commissioners' office were locked, and we didn't know how to proceed. We were stuck on a high floor at 100 Gold St. with no access to the press or to the HPD commissioner. What to do? Jane, with her unerring judgment, sized up the situation and sat down on the floor to protest our being locked out. We simply all sat down with her. We chanted and held signs, and sure enough, after a while the commissioner came out to talk with us. By 3 p.m., HPD officials had arranged for contractors to repair the heating system.

Jane had the instinct to struggle and always got the best of the elected officials or administrators with whom she locked horns. Maybe this was because she cared so much, because she knew so much, and because she could speak more intelligently than any of them. I'll never forget the time we were in Albany in the 1990s when we wanted a meeting with the then Governor Mario Cuomo. Hundreds of tenants swarmed through the hallways, banging on doors, chanting, and singing (led by Jane) until the governor finally agreed to come out and speak to us. Although Governor Cuomo was quite a good speaker and was no fool, Jane wiped up the floor with him, in front of about 100 tenants.

This was a great woman who left her mark on generations of tenant activists!

—Jeanie Dubnau

At the 1963 March on Washington for civil rights.

RGB

viene de la página 3

Cathy, una viuda de 61 años de edad del Bronx que está tratando de conseguir una pensión de invalidez porque tiene ligamentos desgarrados en las rodillas. "Los ingresos no vienen así."

Los inquilinos que acudieron al Gran Salón de Cooper Union para protestar (incluidos varias docenas de residentes del Loisaida con pegatinas que decían "Congelación de rentas ahora" y trabajadores municipales en playeras verdes que decían "Héroes cotidianos," del Consejo Distrital 37) excedieron por mucho en número a los más o menos 40 caseros sosteniendo pancartas que decían "Ayuden a los pequeños propietarios" y "Gastos más altos—rentas más altas." "No vamos a hacerlo fácil," llamó una joven mujer al entrar en tropel un grupo de inquilinos en los pasillos. "Diles cómo te sientes," respondió un anciano. La multitud se acercó poco a poco al lado del salón ocupado por los caseros, coreando "Que abran sus cuentas, ladrones sucios," mientras un casero rubio les gritó "¡Ningún 'almuerzo gratis'! ¡Ningún 'almuerzo gratis'!"

Al proponer la congelación de rentas, el representante de inquilinos David Pagan señaló que "muy pocos apartamentos son asequibles" para inquilinos que ganan menos de un 80 por ciento del ingreso medio de la ciudad, o sea menos de alrededor de $35,000 al año para una sola persona y $50,000 para una familia de cuatro personas. "Ponemos todo el peso en los ingresos y gastos [de los caseros]," dijo a la junta, pero "no hay ninguna fórmula para cuantificar la grave situación de los inquilinos."

"¡Consiga trabajo!" alguien gritó del lado de los caseros.

"No puedo salir del sistema de albergues," dijo Lawrence Lee, de 36 años de edad, quien acaba de conseguir un trabajo de mantenimiento de edificios que paga $7.50 por hora, después de pasar dos años en un albergue para los sin techo. Dijo que desde abril ha tenido un vale de renta del programa municipal Housing Stability Plus con un valor de $765 al mes, pero no ha logrado encontrar un apartamento que se alquile por menos de $850.

Las quejas de los inquilinos penetraron la retórica de la junta mas no su votación. "Nadie puede negar que hay una crisis de vivienda asequible," dijo la miembro público Betty Phillips Adams, al votar en contra de la congelación de rentas. "Los salarios reales están bajando," dijo la miembro público Gale Kaufman, al votar por el aumento final. Lo que Schleider dijo en torno a la pérdida de apartamentos asequibles a causa de la desregulación, una cuestión usualmente planteada por los grupos de inquilinos, fue el preludio a su propuesta de un recargo de un 6 por ciento para los inquilinos a largo plazo y otro recargo para calefacción de $10 por habitación. (La junta rechazó eso, por 7 a 2.) Hasta el presidente de la RGB Marvin Markus se sumó al teatro seudopopulista, al censurar como un "impuesto de pobres" una propuesta de Zelnik para limitar los aumentos de renta en los edificios donde una cuarta parte de los apartamentos ya están desregularizados, porque hubiera dado aumentos más bajos en las áreas donde las rentas se acercan al umbral de desregulación de $2,000.

Los incrementos finales permitidos no fueron tan altos que las pautas preliminares de la RGB, pero mucha gente se verá obligada a salir de sus hogares, dijo el concejal municipal Robert Jackson. Muchos inquilinos acuden a su despacho buscando ayuda para evitar el desalojo, añadió, y "la gente no sabe qué tan grande es la demanda." Sugirió la ampliación del programa de Exención de Incrementos de Renta para las Personas de Mayor Edad (SCRIE).

Aunque los aumentos golpean más fuerte a los pobres y ancianos, los costos de vivienda también han abrumado a los residentes de la ciudad de la clase obrera. "Muchos de nuestros miembros tienen hijos. No es como si estuvieran viviendo solos," dijo Oscar Alvarado, el director asistente político del DC 37. Los 121,000 miembros del sindicato, que incluye a oficinistas municipales, conserjes, guardias del paso de escolares y trabajadores en el Departamento de Parques, ganan entre $20,000 y $35,000 al año, explicó, y se quejan de los problemas de vivienda "todo el tiempo."

"Las rentas se están poniendo totalmente fuera de control. Hay que hacer algo. La gente está reduciendo su comida," dijo el miembro del DC 37 Melvin Benton, quien recomendó una congelación de rentas de tres años para "dar un respiro a la gente de la clase obrera."

NYC Rent Guidelines Board Adjustments (Order No. 36)

for Rent Stabilized Leases commencing Oct. 1, 2004 through Sept. 30, 2005

Lease Type	Current Legal Rent		One-year Lease	Two-year Lease
Renewal Leases	Landlord pays heat		3.5%	6.5%
	Tenant pays heat		3%	6%
Vacancy leases	More than $500	Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	17%	20%
		No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 17%	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20%
	Less than $300	Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	17% plus $100	20% plus $100
		No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allow–ance, plus 17% plus $100	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allow–ance, plus 20% plus $100
	Rent $300 to $500	Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	17% *or* $100, whichever is greater	20% *or* $100, whichever is greater
		No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 17%, *or* $100, whichever is greater	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20%, *or* $100, whichever is greater

This rent guidelines table shows the maximum increases landlords in New York City can legally charge for rent stabilized apartments on all leases commencing in the twelve-month period beginning October 1, 2004. Increases in rent based on the 1- or 2-year renewal guidelines can be charged only once during the period covered by the guidelines, and must be applied to the legal stabilized rent on September 30, 2004. The above guidelines and vacancy bonuses do not apply to an apartment which was rent controlled on that date. There is no low rent supplement, a.k.a. poor tax, allowed.

Sublease Allowance

Landlords can charge a 10 percent increase during the term of a sublease that commences during this guideline period.

Vacancy Leases

In June 1997, Governor George Pataki, as a part of his efforts to destroy rent regulation, forced changes that gave landlords large vacancy bonuses. Provisions of his Rent Regulation Reform Act of 1997 allow the rents of apartments to rise by a statutory percentage: 20 percent for a 2-year lease, and 20 percent minus the difference between the 1- and 2-year renewal guidelines for 1-year leases. The law also allows additional vacancy increases for apartments which have had no vacancy allowance in eight or more years.

Rent Overcharges

Tenants should be aware that many landlords will exploit the complexities of these guidelines and bonuses, and the tenant's unfamiliarity with the apartment's rent history, to charge an illegal rent. The tenant can choose between filing an overcharge complaint with the Division of Housing and Community Renewal or challenging the rent in Housing Court to get a determination of the legal rent.

A prospective tenant who expresses knowledge of their rights will probably not be given a lease to sign. Landlords avoid renting to tenants who may be troublesome. Overcharging is very common. Every tenant should challenge possible overcharge. With DHCR, obtain and fill out *Form RA-89* to determine the correct rent from official records. Call DHCR at (718) 739-6400 to obtain the form or go to: www.dhcr.state.ny.us

Fair Market Rent Appeal

Another type of overcharge frequently occurs at the time that a previously rent controlled apartment becomes vacant and is re-rented as a stabilized unit. The Rent Guidelines Board annually sets what they call the "Special Fair Market Rent Guideline" that is used by DHCR to lower unfair market rents for tenants who file the Fair Market Rent Appeal (FMRA). Under Order 36, it is HUD Fair Market Rent or 50% above the maximum base rent., whichever is higher. No stabilized tenant of an apartment that was decontrolled on or after April 1, 1984 should fail to challenge the so-called Initial Legal Regulated Rent (market rent) that landlords charge upon decontrol. Use DHCR *Form RA-89*. Indicate clearly that your complaint is both a complaint of "overcharge" and "Fair Market Rent Appeal." The Housing Court cannot determine a Fair Market Rent Appeal. Formerly controlled vacant apartments in buildings converted to co-ops or condos do not become stabilized and are not eligible for a Fair Market Rent Appeal.

Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption

Rent stabilized seniors, 62 years or older, whose disposable annual household income is $24,000 or less and who pay (or face a rent increase that would cause them to pay) one-third or more of that income in rent may be eligible for a Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) if they apply to the NYC Dept of the Aging, SCRIE Unit at 2 Lafayette Street, NY, NY 10007. If an otherwise eligible tenant's current rent level is already above one-third of income, it cannot be rolled back, but future rent increases may be avoided. Obtain the SCRIE application form by calling (212) 442-1000.

Loft Units

Legalized loft unit increases above the base rent are 2.5 percent for a one-year lease and 5.5 percent for two years. No vacancy allowance is permitted on vacant lofts.

Hotels and SROs

The board voted to freeze rents for Class A apartment hotels, lodging houses, Class B hotels (30 rooms or more), single room occupancy (SROs) hotels, and rooming houses (Class B, 6-29 rooms). No vacancy allowance is permitted. Landlords cannot collect an increase over the rent charged on September 30, 2004 between October 1, 2004 and September 30, 2005.

High-rent, High-income Deregulation

(1) Apartments legally renting for $2,000 or more a month that became vacant from July 7, 1993 through October 1, 1993, or on April 1, 1994 and thereafter are subject to deregulation. (2) The same deregulation applies in the time periods set forth in (1) above to apartments legally renting for $2,000 or more a month without their becoming vacant if the total household income exceeds $175,000 in each of the prior two consecutive years. To be eligible for this second form of deregulation, the landlord must send an income certification form to the tenant between January 1 and May 1 and file it with and get the approval of DHCR.

For previous guidelines call the RGB at 212-385-2934 or go to www.housingnyc.com.

Mitchell-Lama

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issue before, that just taking a building out of the Mitchell-Lama program could be a basis for "unique and peculiar circumstances."

In their appeal to the state's highest court, the tenants' lawyers argued that the "unique and peculiar" exception could not apply to any pre-1969 buildings at all, and in any event, was meant to apply to at most a handful of apartments, not to nearly 20,000. They also contended that the exception could not be used if the result would effectively rezone entire neighborhoods, and was not meant to apply in cases where the statute was being followed to the letter, as it was here. That would go against the purpose of the ETPA, of bringing apartments back into rent regulation after vacancy decontrol.

In fact, the Court of Appeals decision focused on a law that the tenants and DHCR believe did not apply at all: the Vacancy Decontrol Law (VDL) of 1971. The VDL, which went into effect July 1, 1971, deregulated every apartment as soon as it became vacant. When that proved disastrous, the Legislature passed the ETPA, to recapture into rent regulation all those apartments lost between 1969 and 1974.

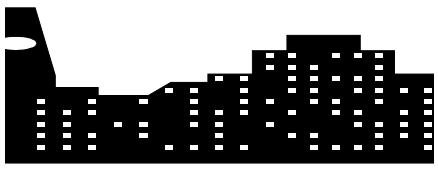
Mitchell-Lama buildings, in the meantime, were somewhere off to the side. The RSL did not apply to them: They didn't need to be rent-stabilized, because their rents were even more effectively regulated. And they weren't then subject to vacancy decontrol because any apartment vacated was still under Mitchell-Lama.

Unfortunately, the Court of Appeals saw it differently. It held that once apartments were taken out of Mitchell-Lama, either the RSL kicked in to help their tenants—or, depending on the dates the apartments were constructed and occupied, the VDL kicked in to deregulate them and then the ETPA restabilized them. And since the ETPA includes a provision allowing for "unique and peculiar circumstances" adjustments, tenants covered by the ETPA are subject to the landlord's applications for those "adjustments."

So tenants in buildings built *before March 10, 1969*, are covered by the RSL if they moved in up to July 1, 1971, and are covered by the ETPA if they moved in after that date. Tenants in buildings built *between March 10, 1969 and January 1, 1974* were never covered by the RSL, and are covered by the ETPA, regardless of when the tenants moved into their individual apartment.

The good news: Many tenants living in their original apartments in pre-1969 buildings are protected from "unique and peculiar circumstances" increase applications. This is especially good since many of those tenants are seniors, and in some particularly stable buildings, like Westgate, these protected tenants may make up about half of the building. (Westgate's landlord's lawyer claimed in a recent issue of the *New York Law Journal* that only 15 percent are protected, but tenants deny that.)

The bad news: Even those tenants will face the loss of their neighbors and the stable, integrated, diverse communities that have been built through Mitchell-Lama. And thousands of tenants in post-1969 buildings still face losing their homes.



An added complication exists for tenants in pre-1969 buildings who transferred apartments after the July 1, 1971 date. There is speculation that anyone who transferred at the landlord's request (such as seniors moving to a smaller apartment) would be protected, while others might not be. That question also may end up be being resolved by the courts.

Right now, there are pending "unique and peculiar circumstances" applications for Central Park Gardens, New Amsterdam House, and West Side Manor, all in Manhattan. Many tenants at Westgate are concerned that an amended rent-increase application may be made for all the post-July 1, 1971 apartments in their building as well.

So what's the next step? Tenants in the pre-1974 buildings and their lawyers must work together with other buildings.

This is important, since the pre-1974s have no help from the city. The City Council's Tenant Empowerment Bill (Intro 186) excludes pre-1974 tenants from the option of buying their building if their landlord wants to take them out of Mitchell-Lama. Council Speaker Gifford Miller asserts that because these buildings are covered by the ETPA, a city effort to help them could run afoul of the Urstadt Law—a view that is not universal.

Nor do the pre-'74s have help from the state. The two bills that Mayor Bloomberg has proposed to the Legislature (sponsored by Assemblymember Vito Lopez and Senator Frank Padavan), to put post-1973 Mitchell-Lamas into rent stabilization and protect them from "unique and peculiar circumstances" increases would not apply to pre-1974s—and Bloomberg has refused to amend his bills. (Some tenants smell a rat: Laurence Gluck, a spokesman for the Real Estate Board of New York, owns six pre-1974 Mitchell-Lamas: Boulevard Towers I, Bruckner Towers, Central Park Gardens, Prospect Towers, Town House West Apartments, and Westwood House.)

Finally, tenants cannot expect help from the federal government, because of the Bush administration's ongoing campaign to cut Section 8 vouchers and its specific efforts to give tenants "enhanced vouchers" in-

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Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE)

Are you 62 years or older? Do you pay 1/3 of your income or more for rent, and is your household income $24,000 or less after taxes? Apply today for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption to see if you qualify for this benefit, which freezes your rent.

SCRIE exempts rent-controlled, rent-stabilized, Mitchell-Lama, and rent-regulated hotel tenants from most rent increases. (If you live in a Mitchell-Lama, see building management. Other limited-equity developments such as Penn South are covered as well.) There is no limit on assets, and in measuring household income, you need only report what roommates contribute for rent, not what they earn.

How to apply

You can apply for the rent-increase exemption with the New York City Department for the Aging by calling 311 (ask for the Department for the Aging, or a SCRIE application); by visiting the agency, writing them, or visiting a local senior center. You can also get a copy of the application off the agency's Web site, and use their "Benefit Quick Check" to see what benefits, including SCRIE, you qualify for. Go to *www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/16benefits.html* and scroll down to the SCRIE section.

NYC Department for the Aging
SCRIE
2 Lafayette Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Mitchell-Lama Buildings— Where They Stand

The buildings whose tenants are affected directly by the Court of Appeals decision (because they were built before March 10, 1969) include a total of 6,466 apartments. They are:

Atlantic Plaza - Brooklyn
Boulevard Towers I – Bronx
Brookdale Hospital – Brooklyn
Bruckner Towers – Bronx
Carol Gardens – Bronx
Dancia Associations – Bronx
Evergreen Gardens – Bronx
Franklin Plaza – Manhattan (East Harlem)
Fordham Towers – Bronx
Independence House – Manhattan
Jewish Hosp. of Bklyn. – Brooklyn
Kissena I – Queens
Lafayette Morrison – Bronx
Noble Mansion – Bronx
Westgate (KSLM-Columbus Apts.) – Manhattan

The buildings covered entirely by the ETPA contain a total of 13,445 apartments. They are:

Albert Einstein Student Housing – Bronx
Bay Towers – Queens (Rockaway Park)
Beekman Staff – Manhattan
Bethune Towers – Manhattan
Central Park Gardens – Manhattan
Columbus House – Manhattan
Columbus Manor – Manhattan
Essex Terrace – Brooklyn
Findlay Houses – Bronx
Ft. Schuyler Houses – Bronx
General Sedgwick House – Bronx
Goodwill Terrace Aparts. – Queens
Hamilton House – Manhattan
Highbridge House – Bronx
Kingsbridge Apartments – Bronx
Kissena II nursing home - Queens
Kittay (W.Kingsbridge) – Queens
Janel Towers – Bronx
Lafayette Boynton – Bronx
Linden Plaza – Brooklyn
Lionel Hampton Houses – Manhattan
Meadow Manor – Queens
Montefiore Staff Housing – Bronx
New Amsterdam – Manhattan
Ocean Park – Brooklyn
Park Lane – Bronx
Phipps Plaza East – Manhattan
Phipps Plaza North – Manhattan
Promenade Apts. – Bronx
Prospect Towers – Brooklyn
Regina Pacis – Brooklyn
River Plaza – Bronx
Robert Fulton Terrace – Bronx
Scheuer House – Brooklyn
Stern Residence – Manhattan
Stratford Towers – Bronx
Tanya Towers – Manhattan
Tower West – Manhattan
Town House West Apts. – Manhattan
Trinity House – Manhattan
Twin Parks N.E. 2 – Bronx
Twin Parks N.E. 6 & 8 – Bronx
Twin Parks N.W. 4,5 & 11 – Bronx
Twin Parks S.E. 3 & 4 – Bronx
Twin Parks S.W. (all 4) – Bronx
Undercliff/Delos House – Bronx
United Odd Fellows Co. – Bronx
West Side Manor – Manhattan
Westview Apartments – Manhattan
Westwood House – Manhattan

RGB Increase

continued from page 1

cent of the median income for the city, or less than about $35,000 a year for a single person and $50,000 for a family of four. "We give all the weight to [landlords'] income and expenses," he told the board, but "there is no formula to quantify the plight of the tenants."

"Get a job!" shouted someone on the landlord side.

"I can't get out of the shelter system," said Lawrence Lee, 36, who just got a $7.50 an hour job in building maintenance after two years in a homeless shelter. He has had a rent voucher good for $765 a month from the city's Housing Stability Plus program since April, he said, but hasn't been able to find an apartment for less than $850.

Tenants' complaints sank into the board's rhetoric, but not their votes. "No one can deny that there is an affordable-housing crisis," said public member Betty Phillips Adams—as she voted against the rent freeze. "Real wages have declined," said public member Gale Kaufman—as she voted for the final increase. Schleider's talk about the loss of affordable apartments to deregulation, an issue usually raised by tenant groups, was a prelude to his proposal for a 6 percent surcharge on long-term tenants and a $10 a room fuel surcharge. (The board rejected that by 7-2.) Even RGB chair Marvin Markus got into the pseudo-populist act, denouncing a Zelnik proposal to limit rent increases in buildings where a quarter of the units are already deregulated as a "poor tax," because it would have given lower increases in areas where rents are nearing the $2,000 deregulation threshold.

The final increases allowed weren't as high as the RGB's preliminary guidelines, but many people will be forced out of their homes, said City Councilmember Robert Jackson. Many tenants come to his office seeking help against eviction, he added, and "people don't know how great the demand is." He suggested expanding the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption program.

BENNETT BAUMER

Though rent increases hit the poor and elderly hardest, housing costs have been crushing the city's working-class residents too for some time. "A lot of our members have children. It isn't like they're living by themselves," said Oscar Alvarado, DC 37's assistant political director. The union's 121,000 members, who include city clerks, custodians, school-crossing guards, and Parks Department workers, typically make between $20,000 and $35,000 a year, he explained, and they complain about housing problems "all the time."

"Rent is getting totally out of control. Something needs to be done. People are cutting back on their food," said DC 37 member Melvin Benton, who urged a three-year rent freeze to "give the working-class people some slack."

Mitchell-Lama

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stead of regular vouchers. For example, at Janel Towers, where the federal department of Housing and Urban Development is refinancing the building as "affordable," rents are going sky-high. Since those rents would exceed the regular Section 8 cap, the government is trying to substitute the more precarious enhanced Section 8 vouchers for qualified tenants.

The only assistance—from the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development—is its standing offer to buy any HUD building that would otherwise be auctioned off and lost to affordable housing immediately.

Tenants in the pre-1974 buildings are therefore planning a meeting this fall, under the auspices of the Community Service Society, to educate ourselves about the court decision, to see where we (and our lawyers) can join forces, and to demand that every mayoral candidate pledge to keep all of us in our homes at affordable rents.

Sue Susman is president of the Central Park Gardens Tenants' Association.

BECOME A WRITING TENANT

Met Council wants to profile you and your neighbors' struggle to obtain affordable quality housing. We want you to write for *Tenant/Inquilino.*

For more information call 212-979-6238

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

LOWER EAST SIDE BRANCH at Cooper Square Committee
61 E. 4th St. (btwn. 2nd Ave. & Bowery)
Tuesdays ..... 6:30 pm

CHELSEA COALITION ON HOUSING
Covers 14th St. to 30th St., 5th Ave. to the Hudson River.
322 W. 17th St. (basement), CH3-0544
Thursdays ..... 7:30 pm

GOLES (Good Old Lower East Side)
525 E. 6th St. (btwn. Aves. A & B) Lower East Side tenants only, 212-533-2541.

HOUSING COMMITTEE OF RENA
Covers 135th St. to 165th St. from Riverside Dr. to St. Nicholas Ave.,
544 W. 157th St. (basement entrance).
Thursdays ..... 8 pm

LOWER MANHATTAN LOFT TENANTS
St. Margaret's House, Pearl & Fulton Sts., 212-539-3538
Wednesdays ..... 6 pm-7 pm

VILLAGE INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS
26 Perry St. (basement), 212-741-2994
Wednesdays ..... 6 pm

WEST SIDE TENANTS UNION
4 W. 76 St.; 212-595-1274
Tuesday & Wednesday ..... 6-7 pm

Hotline Volunteers Needed!

Our phones are ringing off the hook! Met Council is looking for people to counsel tenants on our hotline. We will train you! The hotline runs on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 1:30-5 p.m. If you can give one afternoon a week for this crucial service to the tenant community, call Jenny at (212) 979-6238 x3.

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ON HOUSING

Met Council is a citywide tenant union.

Our phones are open to the public Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays from 1:30 to 5 p.m.

We can briefly answer your questions, help you with organizing or refer you to other help.

212-979-0611

Join Met Council

Membership: Individual, $25 per year; Low-income, $15 per year; family (voluntary: 2 sharing an apartment), $30 per year. Supporting, $40 per year. Sustaining, min. of $100 per year (indicate amount of pledge). For affiliation of community or tenant organizations, large buildings, trade unions, etc. call 212-979-6238.

My apartment ❑ controlled ❑ stabilized ❑ unregulated ❑ other_____

❑ I am interested in volunteering my time to Met Council. Please call me to schedule times and duties. I can ❑ counsel tenants, ❑ do office work, ❑ lobby public officials, ❑ attend rallies/protests.

Name

Address Apt. No.

City State Zip

Home Phone Number Email

Send your check or money order with this form to:
Metropolitan Council on Housing, 339 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10012